

The Small Business Lending Improvements Act will increase the accessibility of small business loans, helping to drive the Kansas economy forward. I especially support its provisions benefiting the rural lenders that serve so many entrepreneurs in my district.

I was pleased to vote for this important and innovative bill.

AVOID FUTURE CAMPUS TRAGEDIES

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. The recent tragedy at Virginia Tech leads us to ask what else could have been done to protect students at our colleges and universities.

The Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is intended to protect the confidentiality of student records and define under what instances parents can have access to student information and grades. Unfortunately, under the definitions in the act, there are many examples where information was not released to parents or guardians regarding a student's mental health, which led to withholding of vital information that could have prevented suicides, assaults and other crimes.

Schools are hesitant to release information for fear of legal action. In my 25 years of practice as a psychologist, I have known many instances where these problems arose.

I am introducing legislation to clarify the act to help define circumstances where universities can release vital information to parents, including risks for suicide, homicide and physical assaults. Further, it will hold harmless colleges and universities who, after consultation with a mental health specialist, act in the best interest of the student, where they can release information to help save lives. We can no longer let this 30-year act be a barrier between parents, students and schools.

I urge my colleagues to sign in support of this bill.

DAY OF DEFEAT

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Iraq defeat bill that this House has passed sets the day certain that American troops will leave Iraq. By doing so, Congress is trying to legislate "defeat day" no matter the consequences.

In other words, retreat, retreat, at any price, retreat. Quit, quit, at any price, quit. Withdraw, withdraw, at any price, withdraw. Flee, flee, at any price, flee. Surrender, surrender, at any price surrender.

Congress has changed the phrase, "when the going gets tough, send in

the U.S. Cavalry, send in the U.S. Marines," to, "when the going gets tough, leave," leave in the darkness of the night and let the Iraqis go it alone.

I am sure there is joy in "Desertville" in the fanatical minds of the enemies of freedom. Mr. Speaker, war is hard. This war is hard. But we cannot neglect our duty because it is hard.

The stability of the region and our national security depend on our U.S. success in defeating the enemy. We need to make it hard on them. Give them a day to remember.

And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRAT BUDGET: "RESERVE FUNDS"

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the American public deserves to have all the facts about the Democrats' \$3 trillion budget resolution.

On the surface, it looks great, more money for program after program, all the while balancing the budget. If it sounds too good to be true, it's because it is.

This budget funds a wish list of spending with so-called reserve funds. On paper, these reserve funds appear to designate funding for billions of dollars in Federal spending. But the fact is they are empty, little more than a clever gimmick to help balance the books, a shell game.

In order to fund them, offsets would have to be found elsewhere or taxes would have to be raised. Since their plan doesn't include offsets, that leaves only one option, tax hikes.

In other words, the Democrats are asking Americans to tighten their belts so that Uncle Sam can loosen his. Congress has serious fiscal challenges to solve, but tax hikes and budget gimmicks are not the right answer.

COMMENDING MOUNT PLEASANT, NORTH CAROLINA, HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM

(Mr. HAYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and pay tribute to the Mount Pleasant High School Wrestling Team for the 2007 North Carolina High School Athletic Association State 1-A/2-A Championship Title win.

Mount Pleasant completed an impressive run to the team championship title. The overall team record for the 2006-2007 season was 31-1. The Tigers also hold the 2007 titles of Cabarrus County Champions, Rocky River Conference Regular Season and Tournament Champions, and 1-A/2-A Midwest Regional Champions.

This season there were nine State qualifiers and eight State place win-

ners on the team, the most in Mount Pleasant's high school history. In the title match, Mount Pleasant recorded 135.5 points to second-place Mayodan Dalton McMichael High School's 82 points.

I am extremely proud of the hard work, dedication and scholarship of these young men from North Carolina's Eighth District. Congratulations, Coach Greg Hinson, Coach Randy Kaiser and the Mount Pleasant High School men's wrestling team on your successful season and State championship victory. Go Tigers.

FAREWELL TO TIA WILLIAMS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Second Congressional District of South Carolina will lose an important public servant. Tia Williams is departing the Washington office to be in graduate school at the University of Virginia where she will seek a master's degree in urban and environmental planning.

Tia has served as staff assistant to the Second District since March 2006. Many South Carolinians have come to know her, as she was vital in arranging tours for Palmetto State families visiting Washington.

A native of South Congaree, Tia is the daughter of Marty and Angie Williams and the sister of Taylor Williams. She is a graduate of Clemson University and Airport High School of West Columbia.

I appreciate Tia's dedication to the people of the Second District. I know she will apply the same dedication to her studies at UVA.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11. All Americans should read the Lieberman op-ed in today's Washington Post.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, APRIL 30, 2007

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon on Monday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 249, WILD FREE-ROAMING HORSES AND BURROS SALE AND SLAUGHTER PROHIBITION

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 331 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 331

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the

House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 249) to restore the prohibition on the commercial sale and slaughter of wild free-roaming horses and burros. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII and except pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate. Each amendment so printed may be offered only by the Member who caused it to be printed or his designee and shall be considered as read. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration in the House of H.R. 249 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

□ 1015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 331.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 331 provides for consideration of H.R. 249, to restore the prohibition on the commercial sale and slaughter of wild free-roaming horses and burros, under an open rule with a preprinting requirement.

The rule provides 1 hour of general debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI. The rule requires that any amendments to the bill must be preprinted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD prior to

their consideration. The rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 249 is a bipartisan bill that restores important protections for wild horses and burros from sale and slaughter. This bill is necessary because these long-standing protections were stripped by a rider inserted into the 2005 omnibus spending bill without a hearing or debate.

The transportation practices faced by these wild horses and burros are cruel and inhumane. They are transferred hundreds or thousands of miles in cramped quarters, just so their meat can be consumed in foreign markets. H.R. 249 bans the sale of wild horses and burros by the Bureau of Land Management, as well as the transfer of these animals for the purpose of processing into commercial products.

Over the last 2 years, the House has voted twice on this issue, and these passed either unanimously or overwhelmingly. But they have never been signed into law. It is time we end this inhumane practice once and for all.

Since the enactment of these protections through the passage of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act in 1971, we have seen wild horse populations fall by more than 50 percent. These animals cannot wait any longer for us to reaffirm our commitment to the protections we promised 34 years ago.

As an animal lover, I am deeply disturbed and opposed to suffering inflicted on animals and will work against practices that lead to their torture or injury. That is why we must pass this rule and pass H.R. 249. These animals need protection, and it is time we restored it for them.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) for the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in 1971 Congress passed the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. That law established as national policy that wild free-roaming horses shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment and death; and to accomplish this, they are considered in the area where presently found as an integral part of the natural system of the public lands. The law also directed that no wild free-roaming horse or its remains may be sold or transferred for consideration for processing into commercial products. However, the fiscal year 2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act directed that wild horses over 10 years old or that were not adopted after three attempts must be sold unconditionally.

While "excess" wild horses have been cited as the reason for the recent changes in law, there are fewer wild horses on the public lands today than there were a quarter of a century ago. In 1980, there were approximately 62,000 wild horses on public lands. Today,

there are approximately 28,000. The underlying bill, H.R. 249, would undo the current practice and would prohibit the commercial sale of wild horses by the Bureau of Land Management.

With regard to process, again the majority likes to proclaim that they have offered another bill under what they are describing as an open rule. But it really is not an open rule. According to a survey of activities of the House Committee on Rules from the 104th Congress, an open rule is defined as "one under which any Member may offer an amendment that complies with the standing rules of the House and the Budget Act." A modified open rule requiring preprinting in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD is defined as a type of rule that permits the offering only of those amendments printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Because Members under this rule that bring the underlying legislation to the floor today must submit their amendments prior to floor consideration, they are prohibited from offering amendments on the floor as the debate progresses. So if a Member, for example, Mr. Speaker, is watching the debate and has an idea to improve the bill pursuant to the debate, he or she has an idea, this rule prevents that Member from offering their amendment. So by its very nature, the rule is restrictive. It is not an open rule. So for the sake of clarity and specificity, we would point that out for the record, and we think the majority should stop calling it an open rule.

I also want to point out that once again the majority offers this modified open rule on noncontroversial, bipartisan bills such as the one that we bring to the floor today, bills that really should be considered under suspension of the rules or under a genuinely open rule. If the majority really wants to live up to their campaign promise of a more open and bipartisan Congress, they should offer open rules, for example on this bill, and on bills where there is some controversy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his support of the underlying measure.

This House, in a bipartisan manner, has demonstrated its strong support for our wild horses and burros twice over the last 2 years. There is no reason we cannot continue this strong commitment to protecting these animals here again today. This is a commonsense issue that must be addressed. No longer can we ignore the inhumane treatment inflicted upon these wonderful and beautiful animals. I urge a "yes" vote on the previous question and on the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 249.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SUTTON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

WILD FREE-ROAMING HORSES AND BURROS SALE AND SLAUGHTER PROHIBITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 331 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 249.

□ 1028

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 249) to restore the prohibition on the commercial sale and slaughter of wild free-roaming horses and burros, with Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 249 is important legislation with broad, bipartisan support. I am pleased to be joined in this endeavor by my colleague, the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. ED WHITFIELD, and a number of other Members on both sides of the aisle.

This Congress is tasked with the stewardship of much that is invaluable, our breathtaking natural wonders, our healthy rivers and streams, icons of American history; and it is our responsibility as public stewards of our land to manage these resources for the good of future generations. It is a responsibility as chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee that I take very seriously.

The proper care and preservation of wild horses which roam public lands in the West fall within our stewardship, and we are failing to live up to our responsibility. I say that because in 1971 Congress formally protected these wild horses and mandated that they cannot be sold or processed into commercial products, in effect, slaughtered.

□ 1030

Since that time when the Bureau of Land Management has determined that the wild horse population is excessive to the ability of the range to support them, captured animals have been offered to the public through adoption.

But all that changed as a result of a rider tucked away into a massive omnibus appropriation bill enacted during December 2004.

The so-called Burns rider overturned 33 years of national policy on the care and management of wild horses and burros by repealing the prohibition on the commercial sale and slaughter of these animals that had been in law. In effect, Mr. Chairman, these animals were earmarked for death.

Since that time, some of these animals, which belong to all Americans I might add, and which represent the very spirit of the American West, have been rounded up for slaughter and shipped overseas.

And to what end? So their meat can end up on menus in France, Belgium and Japan, where it is considered a delicacy.

Incredible. It is truly and simply incredible. We do not allow the commercial sale of horseflesh in this country for human consumption, but we are exporting horse meat for that very purpose abroad.

Since I first introduced this legislation during the last Congress, I have received an impressive volume of heartfelt letters and e-mails from across the Nation.

The very notion that wild horses, wild American horses, would be slaughtered as a food source for foreign gourmets has struck a chord with the American people. They see in this issue the pioneering spirit and the ideals of freedom. And the current policy has created disillusionment with many over how their government works and what their elected leaders stand for.

The measure we are now considering will halt that practice. The sale and slaughter of wild horses and burros must stop not only because it is wrong, but also because the program is a failure.

While the Bureau of Land Management, the Federal agency which oversees the program, may sincerely hope that these animals do not end up on menus in France or Japan or Belgium, the Burns rider severely handicaps efforts to protect these herds.

Now, some will say the sale authority is necessary because the agency costs of managing the program have grown too high, but this is an issue of the BLM's own making. Each year they round up more animals than can be adopted. The excess animals are sent to holding facilities where their numbers simply increase per year, year after year, driving up management costs. If the agency wants to save money without selling these animals, it needs only to get its round-ups and adoptions in sync.

There are also those who say we need to allow these animals to be sold off be-

cause there are too many of them on the public lands and they are causing massive resource damage.

First of all, it should be noted that there are significantly fewer wild horses and burros on public lands today than there were just 25 years ago.

Second, compared to the 3 to 4 million cattle that graze these same acres, wild horses and burros are hardly the most serious threat to our public rangelands.

All I seek to do in this legislation, with H.R. 249, is to return the law to the way it existed for 33 years prior to the Burns rider. The House has twice gone on record supporting a prohibition on the commercial sale and slaughter of wild horses and burros.

So I conclude by asking my colleagues' support once again today. It's time to do right by these living icons of the American West.

I reserve the balance of my time, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is indeed an honor for me to be here with the distinguished chairman of the Resources Committee. Through his illustrious career I have been impressed with the way he has run the committee. I've also been impressed with his commonsense approach to issues, except for this one. And I appreciate the opportunity of being here.

You know, Mr. Chairman, this is the time of year when everyone has a great deal of hope. This is the beginning of the baseball season, where every team, with the possible exception of the Royals, still has a mathematical chance of winning the division.

And as a loyal Cub fan, who is now in my 99th year, consecutive year, of reconstruction and renewal, there is still hope for me.

It is also sad because we are about to commemorate very soon the 43rd anniversary of the worst trade made in the history of baseball, according to many scholars. And that trade was a six-player trade in which my Cubs sent three players, including Lou Brock, to the St. Louis Cardinals in exchange for three other players and Ernie Broglio, who was an 18-game winner at the time.

Now, on paper this trade made great sense for the Cubs. They were getting an outfielder, a veteran relief pitcher, and a starting pitcher, a 20-game winner who had won 18 games the year before.

What happened in reality, of course, is that Lou Brock accepted the role of a lead-off hitter when he went to the Cardinals and spurred them to not only the Pennant but also the World Series victory on his way to a Hall of Fame career.

Broglio, a great pitcher, actually developed arm problems, won only seven games the rest of his career, and 2 years later he is out of baseball.

Now, this is known as one of those great trades that looked perfect on